

# Bee City USA - Charlotte

Report on 2024

## Pollinator Habitat Creation & Enhancement

*Please describe pollinator habitat creation or enhancement projects in your community in 2024, and whether your committee hosted them or not.*

Charlotte's Bee City Committee is hard at work reestablishing pollinator-friendly habitats throughout the city. Through a Lowe's grant, city staff and partners were able to replace sod with over 1500 square feet of pollinator habitat at five Title 1 schools. In total, the organizations represented by the committee planted over 2000 pollinator-friendly plants across Charlotte in 2024. This includes a fundraiser by the Charlotte Wildlife Stewards who, for donations of \$1000 or more, installed pollinator habitats at the property of the donor. In addition to planting new habitats, Charlotte's Bee City Committee members restored several existing habitats in 2024. The City hosted volunteer maintenance days at multiple pollinator sites. In anticipation of Charlotte's annual Earth Day festival, CleanAireNC hosted two invasive species removal days at the site of Charlotte's oldest home. The City also provided \$3000 in grants for neighborhoods to host invasive species removal events in their communities. Finally, the Mecklenburg County Beekeepers Association led an initiative to build and send new beehives to the mountains of western North Carolina. This effort helped to restore and rebuild bee populations lost after Hurricane Helene.

*How many habitat projects did you help to create or enhance in 2024?*

18

*How many people (staff, volunteers, students, partners, etc.) helped with those projects?*

169

*How many projects benefit monarchs, milkweed, or nectar plantings?*

9

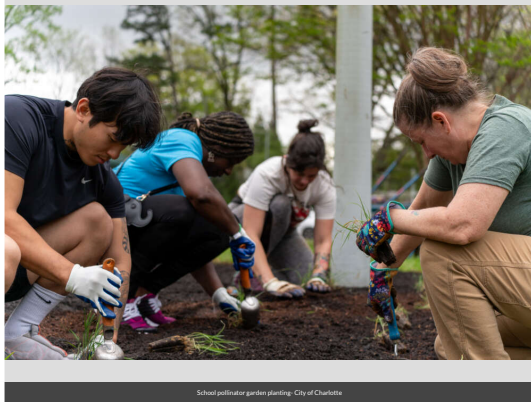
*How many total square feet of habitat were created or enhanced?*

182469

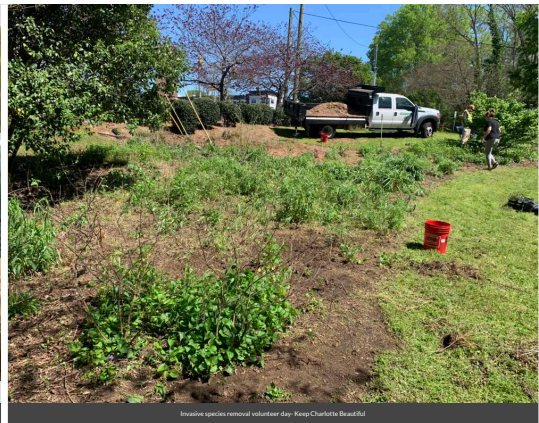
*Please check all that describe the habitats your affiliate helped to create or enhance in 2024 with pollinator benefit in mind.*

- Flower garden
- Natural area with tree snags and stumps, and bare areas for ground nesting species
- Meadow

- Pollinator-friendly lawn (with flowering clover, dandelions...)
- Herb garden
- Native milkweed planting for monarchs and bees (where appropriate)
- Invasive/exotic plant species removal for habitat improvement
- Native pollinator-friendly tree planting
- Roadside/rights of way planting
- School garden



School pollinator garden planting, City of Charlotte



Invasive species removal volunteer day, Keep Charlotte Beautiful

## Education & Outreach

*Please describe pollinator conservation events or outreach activities in your community in 2024, indicating whether your committee hosted them or not.*

The Bee City Committee hosted multiple education events throughout the year, with a particular effort to coordinate activities around National Pollinator Week. In the early Spring, the City's Landscape Management Division began hosting school field trips to their pollinator demonstration garden. Beyond showing the students the gardens, these events have included educational activities focused around instilling an appreciation for pollinators in the students. The County's Park and Recreation Department hosted multiple family-friendly outreach activities around pollinator week as well. Moth night, an after-hours mothing event at a local nature preserve, ended up selling out of their reservable spots. The Charlotte Wildlife Stewards hosted multiple events with the nonprofit Wild Ones to introduce younger generations to pollinators and native plant species in their area. Bee City Committee members were able to reach large audiences at Charlotte's Earth Day and Monarch Festivals, where Keep Charlotte Beautiful offered information on the Bee City initiative at their tent. The latter of these events also corresponded with Charlotte's Mayor Monarch Pledge, a

National Wildlife Federation initiative that frequently aligns with the objectives of the Bee City Committee (and often includes the same partners). Beyond family-friendly outreach, Bee City Committee members took strides to educate the local landscaping industry on pollinator-friendly practices. The City's Landscape Management Division offered two workshops of particular note. The first involved educating contractors on the benefits and best practices involved with installing pollinator-friendly plants in their landscaping. The second focused on introducing the concept of 'leave the leaves' to landscaping companies. These events, attended by nearly 40 landscapers, marked the beginning of a positive outreach trend in this all-too-often monoculture-oriented industry.

*How many pollinator-related events or outreach activities did you host or help with in 2024 (in total)?*

26

*How many people attended those events (in total)?*

2238

*How many Bee City USA logo street signs have you installed to date (in total)?*

2



Charlotte Wildlife Stewards Tent- Earth Day 2024



Bee City Sign- Google Street View

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## Policies & Practices

*Please describe actions taken to make pest management more pollinator-friendly.*

**None in 2024.**

*Are efforts underway in your community to further reduce pesticide use in residential or business areas? This may include neighborhood-led efforts, outreach to landscapers, etc. If so, please describe.*

**The City's Landscape Management Division hosted workshops tailored to landscaping companies to inform them on more sustainable landscaping practices, including reduced pesticide use.**

*In your city or campus, are any policy initiatives underway to further protect pollinators, people or waterways from pesticides?*

**Not in 2024.**

*Did your committee participate in any continuing education on ecologically-based Integrated Pest Management planning?*

**No.**

*Please check actions you have taken to make pest management practices more pollinator-friendly.*

- Avoided use of pesticides in public sites containing designated pollinator habitat or other sensitive features (except when targeted use is deemed the best option for invasive or noxious weed, insect or disease management)
- Implemented non-chemical pest prevention and management methods on city or campus grounds
- Reduced the total area of city or campus-managed lands to which pesticides are applied
- Distributed educational materials to residents or students to encourage the reduction or elimination of pesticide use
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants using “Buying Bee-Safe Plants” methods recommended by Xerces Society. (See <https://xerces.org/publications/fact-sheets/buying-bee-safe-plants>)
- Encouraged developers and private landscapers to source plants that were not treated with neonicotinoids

*Any lessons learned you would like to share?*

The initial intent of affiliating with Bee City was to unite a wide array of government and nonprofit entities that were already doing pollinator work in Charlotte. To that end, this affiliation has proved successful. This entity has worked best when it serves as a looser coalition. While there is some significant coordinated planning around National Pollinator Week, the committee mainly serves to inform and educate on the activities of each participating organization. In a field where entities are too often tempted to compete against each other, Bee City serves as a means of connecting likeminded groups around their common goal.

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Committee Photo

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Learn More

Integrated Pest Management Plan:

Recommended Native Plant List:

<https://charlottenc.gov/GS/asset/LandscapeManagement/Pages/PollinatorGardens.aspx>

Recommended Native Plant Supplier List:

<https://charlottenc.gov/GS/asset/LandscapeManagement/Pages/PollinatorGardens.aspx>

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